

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 2 with the following amended paragraph:

The Fibre Channel port module design of the present invention provides a solution that enables existing hardware to support a data rate increase to ten gigabits per second or higher, and it does so in an extremely efficient manner without requiring significant design changes and with only a relatively straightforward alteration to existing Fibre Channel switching environments. The present invention provides a port module for use in a Fibre Channel switching environment. More particularly, the port module of one aspect of the invention provides using a single ten gigabit per second port to provide higher utilization for multiple lower speed ports. The port module couples to the existing ports of a switching device, such as a crossbar switch in a Fibre Channel fabric, and provides an ANSI 10GFC compliant fibre interface to the port module and support for trunking on the backplane of the port module. In doing so, the invention reuses existing product infrastructure and customer investment to increase overall data throughput.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 7 with the following amended paragraph:

Port module 200 comprises a frame reader block 275. Frame reader block is responsible for reading stored frames from buffer memory 260 and transferring them to an external switching element coupled to backplane data interface 270. QM 245 passes frame header word information, buffer to access and the switching element path to use to frame reader 275. Frame reader [[245]] 275 creates and transmits the header word immediately followed by frame data on the selected switching element path. Port module also has an associated transmit handler 285. Transmit handler (TH) 285 provides the interface for transmission of frames at the port.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 16, line 3 with the following amended paragraph:

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In one embodiment, the fibre channel input to XPM 310 in Figure 3 is a 10 Gb/s link and the input to UPM [[300]] 330 is either a 1 Gb/s link or a 2 Gb/s link. Fibre channel frames may originate at either the 1 Gb/s link or 2 Gb/s link coupled to UPM [[300]] 330 destined for the 10 Gb/s link coupled to XPM 310. Similarly, fibre channel frames may originate at the 10 Gb/s link coupled to XPM 310 destined for either the 1 Gb/s link or 2 Gb/s link coupled to UPM [[300]] 330. The configuration of the port modules in Figure 3 allows for a 10G to 1G or 2G data transfer from XPM 310 to UPM [[300]] 330, or a 1G or 2G to 10G data transfer from UPM [[300]] 330 to XPM 310.

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